



May 29, 2018

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Public Comments of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children in PS Docket No. 15-91 (Wireless Emergency Alerts)

Dear Secretary Dortch:

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) submits the following information in support of continued improvements to the WEA system and to refresh the record on facilitating multimedia content in Wireless Emergency Alerts.

To date 924 abducted children have been safely recovered specifically as a result of the AMBER Alert Program. Since the inception of Wireless Emergency Alerts, NCMEC has issued more than 600 Wireless Emergency Alert activations on behalf of AMBER Coordinators. These Alerts serve to galvanize the entire community to search for children in life-threatening danger, and it remains crucial to ensure the most relevant and appropriate information is available to help find these missing children.<sup>1</sup>

NCMEC has many years of experience providing operational support and managing secondary distribution initiatives for the AMBER Alert program. NCMEC is happy to share the insights gained during this time and provide suggestions for improving the effectiveness of WEA messages, towards the goal of locating abducted children quickly and safely.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Recent AMBER Alert success stories are listed on NCMEC's website at <http://www.missingkids.org/gethelpnow/amber/success>. This includes descriptions of several cases in which the WEA message itself was specifically credited for the safe return of an abducted child.

<sup>2</sup> Although this submission focuses only on aspects most directly responsive to the current public notice, NCMEC would also encourage the Commission to review its Public Comments, Reply and Opposition, and Notices of *Ex Parte* Presentations submitted previously in PS Docket No. 15-91 which contain additional related and overlapping information.

## **Reliability and Usefulness of Information**

When considering the technical feasibility of incorporating multimedia content into WEA messages it is important to ensure the delivery of messages to recipients remains reliable and error-free. The Commission's rule requiring participating CMS Providers to support embedded references<sup>3</sup> should allow users who wish to interact and obtain information beyond the recently-expanded limitations of a WEA AMBER Alert message, to seek out further relevant details (e.g., images or abduction circumstances). Because of this increased external capability it is important to ensure that any multimedia content delivered directly within messages is received without any issues that might detract from the effectiveness of an AMBER Alert. Each AMBER Alert broadcast is sent to prompt the community to help search for an abducted child, so images or other proposed types of multimedia content should be considered in the context of most effectively eliciting this desired reaction from recipients.

## **Information and Message Retrieval**

NCMEC seeks to ensure that both the multimedia and text-based information provided in WEA messages remains easily retrievable by all recipients and is preserved (to the extent possible) on user devices so they can view AMBER Alert information even after the time of initial broadcast. NCMEC has previously noted that the history and current operation of the AMBER Alert program includes utilizing highway signs and transmitting vehicle information,<sup>4</sup> so one commonly-experienced user scenario involves a WEA message recipient who is driving at the time of the initial message broadcast and wishes to refer back to the contents of the message at a more convenient and safer time.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children appreciates the opportunity to discuss these important issues, to further improve the effectiveness of WEA messages, and ultimately to better protect our nation's children.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle C. DeLaune  
Senior Vice President, Chief Operating Officer  
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

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<sup>3</sup> 47 CFR § 10.441.

<sup>4</sup> See Letters from Preston Findlay, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children to Marlene Dortch, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission PS Docket No. 15-91 (filed March 2, 2016 and July 6, 2017).